

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 1318

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, FI

SUBJ: PROSPECTS FOR NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT AND SDP VIEWS
THEREON

1. SUMMARY: SDP CONGRESS RESOLUTIONS, AND SPEECHES BY NEW SDP CHAIRMAN SORSA AT JUNE 5-8 CONGRESS, MADE IT CLEAR THAT SDP HAS EVERY INTENTION OF PARTICIPATING IN THE POST-SEPTEMBER ELECTION GOVERNMENT, BUT IS SETTING TOUGH TERMS FOR CONTINUATION OF SAME KIND OF SDP-CENTRIST COALITION LIKE RECENT SORSA GOVERNMENT. SDP SAID IT READY TO COOPERATE WITH COMMUNIST PARTY ON CASE BY CASE BASIS, INCLUDING GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION, BUT REFUSED COOPERATE WITH COMMUNIST-FRONT SKDL AND GENERALLY DEPRECATED CHANCES FOR COMMUNISTS BEING ABLE TO HEAL THEIR OWN RIFT SUFFICIENTLY TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO COME INTO NEXT GOVERNMENT. PRESIDENT KEKKONEN INSTRUCTED LIINAMAA "EXPERTS" INTERIM GOVERNMENT SET UP JUNE 13 TO PROCEED IN MANNER SO AS NOT TO MAKE FORMATION OF POLITICAL GOVERNMENT UNNECESSARILY DIFFICULT AFTER ELECTIONS. CONSERVATIVES HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR INTEREST AND DESIRE
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PARTICIPATE IN FUTURE GOVERNMENT. BECAUSE OF ALMOST

INSUPERABLE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES FACING FINLAND, IT POSSIBLE THAT BROADEST POSSIBLE COALITION WILL BE ATTEMPTED. NEGOTIATIONS FOR FORMATION OF POST-ELECTION GOVERNMENT WILL BE DIFFICULT AND PROBABLY PROTRACTED. IT THEREFORE POSSIBLE THAT INTERIM "EXPERTS" GOVERNMENT WILL SIT FOR CONSIDERABLY MORE THAN EXPECTED ONE HUNDRED DAYS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN SPEECHES AND ANSWERS TO PRESS THAT NEWLY ELECTED SDP CHAIRMAN SORSA; AND OTHER LEADERS OF FINLAND'S LARGEST PARTY, MADE IN CONNECTION WITH THE SDP JUNE 5-8 CONGRESS, THEY CONSISTENTLY STATED, PROGRAMS, GOALS, AND WISHES ASIDE, THAT AFTER SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS A GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE TO BE FORMED AND THAT ONLY REALISTIC PROSPECT FOR A MAJORITY GOVERNMENT APPEARS TO BE A REPETITION OF FOUR-PARTY SDP-CENTRIST COALITION THAT SORSA HEADED FOR OVER THOUSAND DAYS.

3. SDP LEADERSHIP DID NOT IN PRINCIPLE EXCLUDE COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN COALITION GOVERNMENT, BUT GENERALLY DEPRECATED THE COMMUNISTS OWN ABILITY TO DECIDE IN FAVOR THIS BECAUSE OF THE CONTINUING SERIOUS RIFT WITHIN COMMUNIST PARTY -- ONE OF THE MAJOR SPLITS BEING OVER QUESTION OF GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION.

4. SORSA MADE IT CLEAR THAT SDP COOPERATION WITH COMMUNISTS COULD ONLY TAKE PLACE ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS AND IN SUCH WAYS THAT THE IDENTITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL SEPARATENESS OF THE TWO PARTIES WAS MAINTAINED, I.E. THE SDP DOES NOT WANT TO RUN RISK OF COOPERATING WITH COMMUNISTS IN VARIOUS MASS MOVEMENTS, FRONT ORGANIZATIONS, OR JOINT EFFORTS WHERE THERE WOULD BE RISK OF COMMUNISTS BEING ABLE TO TAKE OVER OPERATION. SORSA REFERRED TO COMMUNIST RULE OF SKDL FRONT AS DANGEROUS EXAMPLE. SDP WILL BE STARTING DISCUSSIONS WITH COMMUNISTS ON THIS QUESTION AGAIN IN NEAR FUTURE, BUT NO REAL RESULTS ARE EXPECTED SOON.

5. WHILE KEEPING DOOR OPEN FOR COOPERATION WITH COMMUNISTS,
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SDP MADE IT CLEAR THAT SUCH COULD ONLY BE WITH FINNISH COMMUNIST PARTY (SKP) ITSELF, AND UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WITH COMMUNIST-FRONT PEOPLES' DEMOCRATIC LEAGUE (SKDL). THIS STAND REPRESENTS ATTEMPT BY SDP TO UNDERMINE NON-COMMUNIST SUPPORT FOR SKDL IN HOPE THAT SUCH SKDL VOTERS WILL TURN TO SDP RATHER THAN SKP.

6. WHEN LIINAMAA INTERIM "EXPERTS" GOVERNMENT WAS

INSTALLED JUNE 13, PRESIDENT KEKKONEN INSTRUCTED IT TO PERFORM ITS DUTIES IN SUCH MANNER THAT POST-ELECTION FORMATION OF POLITICAL GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT BE MADE MORE DIFFICULT. WHEN CHOOSING THE MINISTERS FOR THE LIINAMAA GOVERNMENT, KEKKONEN SEEMS TO HAVE TRIED BOTH TO MAINTAIN A BALANCE SIMILAR TO THAT OF SORSA GOVERNMENT AND TO BROADEN BASE BY NAMING ONE CONSERVATIVE AND OFFERING THE COMMUNISTS ONE SEAT -- WHICH THEY DECLINED. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE ONE CONSERVATIVE THE MINISTERS IN THE LIINAMAA GOVERNMENT CLEARLY IDENTIFIABLE AS TO PARTY MEMBERSHIP DO FIT THE SORSA GOVERNMENT PATTERN. AMONG THOSE MINISTERS LESS CLEARLY IDENTIFIABLE THERE SEEMS TO BE A SLIGHT PREPONDERANCE OF PEOPLE LEANING TOWARD THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. THUS, KEKKONEN'S IDEA SEEMS TO BE ASSURE TO THAT A MAJORITY GOVERNMENT CAN BE FORMED LATER AROUND THE TRADITIONAL SDP-CENTRIST NUCLEUS, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME NOT FORECLOSING A MORE BROADLY BASED COALITION ALSO INCLUDING CONSERVATIVES AND/OR COMMUNISTS.

7. CONSERVATIVES, WHO WERE NOT PART OF SORSA COALITION BUT HOLD DEFENSE MINISTRY IN LIINAMAA GOVERNMENT, HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR INTEREST AND DESIRE TO PARTICIPATE IN FUTURE POLITICAL GOVERNMENT, IN FACT ALMOST DEMANDING THE RIGHT TO DO SO. THEY HAVE GONE AS FAR AS TO SAY THAT THEY COULD WELL ENVISAGE PARTICIPATING IN A COALITION THAT INCLUDED COMMUNISTS. CONSIDERING FACT THAT FINLAND FACES ALMOST INSUPERABLE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES -- WHICH REQUIRE BROADEST POSSIBLE PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT FOR TOUGH LEGISLATION THAT FUTURE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE TO PRESENT--THE CHANCES OF THE CONSERVATIVES BEING ABLE TO BREAK THEIR NINE YEAR "EXILE" FROM GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION LOOK BETTER
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THAN EVER.

8. ALL THE PARTIES CONCERNED, INCLUDING THE SDP, ARE PLAYING IT TOUGH AS FAR AS THEIR TERMS FOR PARTICIPATING IN GOVERNMENT ARE CONCERNED. SDP IN PARTICULAR IS INSISTING THAT FUTURE PARTNERS MAKE OUT VERY SPECIFIC GOVERNMENT PROGRAM AND STICK TO IT. EVERYONE WILL BE MAKING MAXIMUM DEMANDS WHEN GOVERNMENT FORMATION NEGOTIATIONS START IN LATE SEPTEMBER AND IT IS CLEAR THAT NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE BOTH DIFFICULT AND IN ALL LIKELIHOOD PROTRACTED. GIVEN THIS, IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT LIINMAA "EXPERTS" GOVERNMENT WILL SIT FOR SOME TIME AFTER SEPTEMBER 21-22 ELECTIONS AND THUS CONSIDERABLY MORE THAN THE ONE HUNDRED DAYS LIINAMAA HAS SET AS MAXIMUM DESIRED TERM.

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